504 150 miles upstream from Chungking. Two lesser tributaries empty into the Yangtze near Lu-chou and make the city a market for native products of southern Szechwan and northern Kweichow and Yunnan provinces. Further up-river from Lu-chou is I-pin, terminal of steamer shipping on the Yangtze. The proposed Szechwan-Yunnan Railway will pass through I-pin.

361 The Szechwan provincial capital is Chengtu, located on the westernmost of four major tributaries to the Yangtze River in the province. As an old cultural center of West China, this city is well known for its handicraft industries and is reputed to have an atmosphere like that of
499 Peking. The completion of the Chengtu-Chungking Railway -- an event overpublicized in the Communist press in 1952 -- brings Chengtu into closer contact with a number of important cities in central-south Szechwan, such as Nei-chiang, the only large center for the sugar industry in West China, and Lung-ch'ang. The proposed Szechwan-Yunnan Railway is to start from Nei-chiang, passing southwest through Tzu-kung
[317] Municipality. Salt extraction in the Tzu-kung area dates back to the tenth century. In 1953 there were 330 natural gas wells supplying 4,382 brine boilers in Tzu-kung. A railway linking Chengtu with Kansu Province in the north is under construction. This railway will pass Kuang-yüan, a strategic point on the northern
491 approach to Szechwan. The existing highway

178 Another problem was the number of steel plants and textile mills which had been established in the Southwest during war against Japan. The years of civil war in 1949 and 1950 had produced a depression, and industry and commerce could no longer maintain themselves. As a remedy the Communists proposed the construction of the Chungking-Chengtu Railroad. In spite of the great financial difficulties in which the Communist central government was involved at that time, it was decided to invest an amount of money equivalent to 76,000,000 catties of rice for highway construction and 180,000,000 catties for railroad construction. These projects stimulated the revival of the steel, coal, and electrical engineering industries and the economic condition of Szechwan gradually improved.

563 A further problem special to this region was 162 that of the national minorities which amounted, according to the latest census and the report of Wang Wei-chou, to about 12 million

Tibetans	2,775,627
Yi People	3,254,269
Miao People	2,511,339
Chung-chia	1,600,000
Mohammedans	1,000,000
Min-chia	600,000
Thai People	400,000
Total	12,341,235

636 In order to meet the demands of these minorities, 563 autonomous areas were established. The Tibetans in Sikang constitute a special area, even though

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499 Over one-third of the total construction work of the Chengtu-Chungking Railway had been completed by the Nationalists before 1949; the Communists finished the railway in June 1952.[2] According to the Communists, they built 15 new tunnels, 28 large bridges, 189 small bridges, 446 culverts, and about two-thirds of the road foundation.[3] About 35,230 tons of steel rails and 1,250,000 railway ties were needed.[4] Most of the steel rails were supplied by the iron and steel plant at Chungking.[5] The supply of railroad ties presented serious problem but a sifficient amount of timber was collected when the Communists announced that peasants would be allowed to pay land tax in timber instead of grain.[6]

499 661 When the Chengtu-Chungking Railway was under construction, a great number of charges of waste and corruption were brought against officials. In Chiu-lung-p'o, Communist

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2. Tsu-kuo Chou-k'an [China Weekly], Hong Kong, July 11, 1955, p. 13.

3. Ta-kung Pao [Ta-kung Daily], Hong Kong, July 12, 1950, July 4, 1951.

4. Wang Chih-fen, op. cit., p. 25.

5. Chao Yung-seen, Railways in Communist China, Hong Kong, Union R search Institute, 1955, pp. 23-24.

6. Ibid.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF1 6 SW China
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499 cadres were charged with stealing ¥1,000 661 million ($40,000).[7]

Many bridges collapsed and had to be rebuilt because material of poor quality had been used.[8] Some Communists cadres could not be trusted to inspect the quality of work done, and others were willing to approve poor work if the contractors paid them a bonus or offered bribes.[9]

497 In July 1952 the Chengtu-Chungking Railway was open to traffic.[10] This railroad, which runs through the richest farmlands of Szechwan, brought new economic prosperity to the province. With the low-cost transportation, the region can sell rice, sugar, salt, and coal in many markets. Principal native products (hemp, vegetable oil, tobacco, and herb medicine) of Western Szechwan are shipped in large quantities from Chengtu to Chungking by rail and thence down the Yangtze River to Central-South and East China.[11]

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7. Hsin-hua Jih-pao [New China Daily], Chungking, Feb. 22, 1952.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. China Weekly, Hong Kong, July 11, 1955.
11. People's China, Peking, Foreign Languages Press, July 16, 1953, p. 29.

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497 During the first year of operation, over 1,200,000 tons of freight and nearly 2,500,000 passengers were shipped by way of the Chengtu-Chungking Railway.[12] The business turnover of Chengtu, the capital of Szechwan, was 12 per cent higher in May 1952 than in May of the preceding year.[13] An express train from Chungking to Chengtu took 16 hours in July 1953, five hours less than in 1952. Freight tonnage increased by 277.4 per cent and the number of passengers by 118.7 per cent in less than a year.[14] The Communists estimated that over 33 per cent more freight would be carried by the Chengtu-Chungking Railway in 1955 than in 1952 according to one report.[15]

499 Another important railway (the Pao-chi--Chengtu Railway) to link the Southwest with the Northwest is now (1956) under construction. Construction began on July 1, 1953, and the entire line is to be completed in August 1957, the last year of the first Five-Year Plan.[16]

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12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. New China News Agency, Chungking, June 20, 1955.
16. People's Handbook, Tientsin, Ta-kung pao, 1955, p. 525.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
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499 But the Communists now expect to complete the line eight months ahead of the original schedule.[17] At the southern terminal, Chengtu, the line will connect with the Chengtu-Chungking Railway, at the northern terminal, Pao-chi, an important industrial center of Northwest China, it will connect with the Lunghai Railroad, which runs from Lanchow in Kansu Province to the port of Lien-yün-kang on the East China coast. The construction of the southern section of the railway, from Chengtu to Lüeh-yang, called for twice as many tunnels as were built for the entire Chengtu-Chungking Railway. The Pa-miao-kou Tunnel is one of the longest in the country.[18] According to Communist plans, the southern section of the Pao-chi--Chengtu Railway, including the laying of rails to Kuang-yüan, 345 kilometers from Chengtu, will be completed in 1954, as will approximately 40 per cent of the roadbed for the section from Kuang-yüan to Lüeh-yang.[19] The target for 1955 was the completion of track-laying between Kuang-yuan and Lüeh-yang.[20]

Work on the northern section has been much more difficult and hazardous because

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17. New China News Agency, Peking, July 5, 1955.
18. Ta-kung Daily, Hong Kong, July 4, 1955.
19. Ibid.
20. New China News Agency, Peking, July 8, 1955.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China
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499 the railway must pass through innumerable mountains and bridge many deep ravines. About 35 per cent of the roadbeds have to be built on solid rock.[21] Over 30 per cent of the rails had to be laid in tunnels on the section from Pao-chi to Ch'in-ling.[22] In 1955, five tunnels were completed on the northern section and the largest Ch'in-ling tunnel was finished.[23]

496 The section between Chungking and Kan-shui-ch'ang on the Szechwan-Kweichow Railway was completed by the Nationalist regime. Connection with the Chengtu-Chungking Railway has facilitated the shipment of grains, tung oil, and minerals from Chi-chiang and a few other points in Kweichow to Chungking.[24] The original narrow-guage rails have been changed to standard-guage.[25]

The Chengtu-Kunming Railway starts in Nei-chiang on the Chengtu-Chungking Line, passes through Tzu-liu-ching (Tzu-kung), and runs along the Chin-sha River and the Hsiao River to reach Kunming, a total distance of 810 kilometers.[26] The route was

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22. Ibid.
23. Survey of China Mainland Press, Hong Kong, Dec. 24, 1953.
24. Wen-hui Daily, Hong Kong, June 25, 1955.
25. Ibid.
26. Chao Yung-seen, op. cit., p. 20.

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499 The Chinese Nationalist Government began to build the Yunnan-Burma Railway in the spring of 1941 under an agreement between China, the United States, and Great Britain. In 1942, following the occupation of Rangoon by the Japanese, the work was stop. Only the short section between Kunming and An-ning (35 kilometers (22 mi.)) and about 50 per cent of the earth and stone work of the 550-kilometer section between Wu-chia-chai and Hsiang-yün had been completed.[31]

498 There are two large railway plants in Southwest China -- the Chungking Railway Plant and the Kunming Railway Plant. They are not as well-equipped as those in Central-South, East, and North China, where freight and passenger cars and locomotives have been manufactured.[32]

497 The railroads in Communist China are managed in accordance with the "advanced experience" of Soviet Russia. The most

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31. Chin Shih-hsüan, T'ieh-lu Yü K'ang-chen Chi Chien-she [Railways and War and Reconstruction], Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1947, pp. 107-108.

32. Chinese Communist Problems, Hong Kong, Freedom Press, Series No. 1, 1954, pp. 75-76.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China AF16

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Table 3.* Interprovincial and Provincial Highways in Southwest China.

(Unit: Km. = kilometer. Mi. = miles.)

HIGHWAY	TERMINALS	LENGTH
Sinkiang-Tibet Line	Yarn-Lhasa	2255 Km. (1409 Mi.)
Chengtu-Apa Line	Chength-Apa	507 Km. (317 Mi.)
Chinghai-Sikang Line	Hsiehwu-Taot'angho	673 Km. (421 Mi.)
Szechwan-Shansi Line	Chengtu-Paochi	770 Km. (481 Mi.)
Sikang-Yunnan Line	Fut'ien-Huili	433 Km. (271 Mi.)
Kunming-Talo Line	Kunming-Talo	-------
Yunnan-Kweichow Line	Kunming-Kweiyang	659 Km. (412 Mi.)
Szechwan-Yunnan (W.) Line	Chennan-Chinshaho	243 Km. (152 Mi.)
Szechwan-Yunnan (E.) Line	T'ienshengeb'iao-Ch'ihshuiho	512 Km. (320 Mi.)
Szechwan-Kweichow Line	Sanch'iao-Ch'ungch'iho	306 Km. (191 Mi.)
Kweichow-Kwangsi (E.) Line	Kweiyang-Liuchai	300 Km. (187 Mi.)
Kweichow-Kwangsi (W.) Line	Hotsuling-Patu	266 Km. (166 Mi.)
Szechwan-Sikang Line	Chengtu-K'angting	333 Km. (208 Mi.)
Chengtu-Chungking Line	Chengtu-Chungking	413 Km. (258 Mi.)
Chungking-Wanydan Line	Chungking-Wanydan	417 Km. (261 Mi.)
Chienchiang-Sanchiaop'ing Line	Chienchiang-Sanchiaop'ing	785 Km. (491 Mi.)
Kunming-Hok'ou Line	Kunming-Hok'ou	297 Km. (186 Mi.)
	TOTAL.....	9761 Km. (5662 Mi.)

* Fei-ch'i Ti Kung-lu Chiao-t'ung /The Highway Transportation of Communist Area/. Taipei, Sixth Section, Central Committee, Nationalist Party, 1953, pp. 22-25.

(Table 3 faces p. 865)

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499 Before the war of resistance against Japan, the highways in Southwest China (including country roads) amounted to 11,818 kilometers (7,386 miles) of which 6,812 kilometers (4,258 mi.) were paved with concrete or surfaced with tar.[44] During the war, the Nationalist Government built many new highways in the Southwest to meet military needs.[45] Since 1950, the Communists have built a number of new highways, including a network of roads in the minority areas. During the three-year period 1952-54, thirgy-four new highways (over 5,000 kilometers or 3,125 miles) were constructed.[46] Of these highways, the Sikang-Tibet Highway, the Chengtu-A-pa Highway, and the Kunming-Talo Highway are most important. The Sikang-Tibet Highway runs from Lhasa to Ya-an, a distance of 2,240 kilometers (1,400 mi.)[47] It climbs over mountains 16,000 feet above sea level. This was the first road to be built at such an altitude. In the past, traders with pack-trains

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44. Mao Shou-chin Kung-lu Ch'ang-shih [Common Knowledge about Highways], Shanghai, 1951, p. 3.

45. Ibid., p. 8.

46. Ching-chi Nien-pao [Economic Year Book], Hong Kong, Economic Bulletin Publishing Co., 1954, pp. 50-51.

47. China Reconstructs, Peking, The China Welfare Institute, May 1955, p. 2.

491 of yaks journeyed for months to bring their
499 goods to "the roof of the world," toiling over the ranges and deep valleys of the Tibetan plateau. But today trucks make the trip to Lhasa from Shanghai or Peking in as little time as 15 days.[48] When the Communists decided in 1950 to build this highway, teams were sent out to make a complete survey of the terrain. Soviet experts were consulted before the final choice of the route through Ch'ang-tu and T'ai-chao was made.[49]

Construction of the Sikang-Tibet Highway was extraordinarily difficult. The line was divided into 100-kilometers (60 mi.) sections, and workers were equipped with rock-drills and power-driven saws.[50] The snow-line on the Tibetan plateau was 15,000 feet above sea-level, and in certain area the earth was frozen so hard that workers had to use dynamite to blast it.[51]

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48. Ibid.
49. Far Eastern Economic Review, Hong Kong, June 23, 1955, p. 786.
50. Ibid.
51. China Reconstructs, May 1955, p. 3.

49/ The bridging of the Nu River was another
499 difficult project in the building of the highway. Both banks of the river rose to a height of 3,000 feet. The river's current ran at a rate of 20 feet per second.[52] Another section of the highway cut across an immense tract of virgin forest, and it took the workers a long time to fell all the huge trees.[53] The Lhasa River Bridge, the last bridge of the highway, was completed in the latter part of December 1954 and the highway was open to motor traffic.[54]

49/ The Chengtu-A-pa highway is another principal highway built by the Communists through one of the national minorities areas in Southwest China. Its construction was begun in March 1951 and was completed in November 1955.[55] It runs from Chengtu, the capital of Szechwan Province to A-pa, the commercial center of the Tibetan Autonomous District in Szechwan, a distance of 509 kilometers (318 mi.)[56] During a three-year period prior to November 1955, grains and building and industrial materials shipped to

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52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid., p. 4.
55. People's Handbook, Tientsin, Ta-kung Pao, 1955, p. 532; Economic Bulletin, Hong Kong, March 21, 1955, p. 12.
56. Ibid.

697 agencies in the whole region began to clear the accumulated cases and organized the convicts for Reform through labor.[1] A report from Formosa estimated the number of prisoners sentenced to death or to Reform-through-labor for political reasons in this area at 1,484,000 up to the end of 1953, and those who had been put under public surveillance[2] at 743,154. The latter also were forced to perform manual labor.

But in some cases of forced labor, the political aspect has been overshadowed by the economic significance. Men were sent to forced-labor camps not only because they held different political views from the ruling class, but also because they were needed to fulfill huge economic plans such as the Hwai River project in East China and the Ching River harnessing project in the Central-South Region. In the Southwest similar examples may be found in the construction of the Chengtu-Chungking Railway and of the Sikang-Tibet Highway.

II. MASS LABOR IN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION (CHENGTU-CHUNGKING LINE)

•499 The Chengtu-Chungking Line is 505

1. Hsin-hua Jih-pao [New China Daily], Chungking, Nov. 21, 1950.

2. Pei-kuan-chih T'ieh-mu Hou Ti Hsi-nan [Southwest China Behind the Iron Curtain], Taipei, Sixth Section, Central Committee, the Nationalist Party, 1954, No. 5, p. 3.

1:Stanford U, S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China AF16

499 kilometers (about 314 miles) in length and connects the provincial capital of Szechwan Province and the commercial center of the Southwest Region. In addition to the building of roadbeds, which had been partly finished by the Nationalists, the entire work consisted of building 45 tunnels, 327 bridges, 701 culverts, and 26,530,000 cubic feet of earthwork.[3] It was begun in June 1950 and was completed by the end of June 1952, six months in advance of the scheduled time. It was opened to traffic on July 1 of that year.

A. Recruitment of Labor

499 464 In June 1950, the Southwest Railway Engineering Committee was created by the Southwest Military and Political Committee. Because of the urgent need for construction, the authorities first used the regular army. At the same time, the Southwest Railway Engineering Committee, in co-operation with the hsien governments, worked on the recruitment of civilian labor. In addition to patriotic appeals such as they had used in other mass-labor projects, the authorities promised the peasants

3. Wang Chih-fen, Chengtu-Chungking Railway, Shanghai, 1954, pp. 18-19.

499 reduction of land rent, the return of rental
464 deposits on their land, and a cheap supply of daily necessities to the workers along the construction sites. The methods of recruitment seemed to be effective. Some 38,000 persons answered the call from the eastern part of that province; 30,000 from the southern part, 10,000 from Chengtu and the western part; 6,000 from the northern part; and 22,000 unemployed workers from Chengtun and Chungking also took part in the construction. The total labor force amounted to 104,000 men.[4] After the recruited civilians were organized, they took over the construction job from the army, some members of which were kept to act as office personnel and as an engineering corps.

B. Organization and Living Conditions of the Labor Force

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466 The units of the labor organization were formed according to the plan of the projected line, which was divided into 180 sections. Each section was allocated 579 workers. Each group of workers was divided into two shifts. They were formed into small teams according to the character of the work assigned to them. Their

4. Cheng Chu-yüan, Chung-kung ti Nu-kung Chin-tu [Slavery System of the Chinese Communist] Hong Kong, Tzu-ch'u-pan-she, 1952, p. 89.

499 sphere of movement was restricted to within
466 2 li (about 545 yards) on each side of the construction line.

499 The recruits were paid according to piece
465 rates, calculated on the basis of the work-day unit. One work-day unit is what an average worker could accomplish in one day. In the case of the Chengtu-Chungking Railway construction, one work-day unit is 2.5 cubic meters (about 81.75 cubic feet) of earthwork. For this amount of work, one worker received seven and one-half catties (about 8.25 lbs.) of rice.[5] In Southwest China, one catty of medium-grade rice was sold for 740 yuan (old currency); one U.S. dollar was worth about 20,000 yuan at the time. Therefore, 7.5 catties of rice would be worth about 27 cents in the United States. With this amount of money per day, the worker had to provide for his food, clothing, and other necessities, not to mention the support of his family.

499 The recruits were required to bring their own tools such as pickaxes and bamboo poles, for railway construction in China depended upon physical labor rather than upon mechanical equipment. Machinery for the laying of tracks was not introduced until the spring of 1954 in building the Pao-chi-Chengtu Line. The workers

5. The World Today, Hong Kong, Oct. 15, 1952, p. 2.

499 on the Chengtu--Chungking Line came to depend upon the primitive tools they brought, or used their bare hands. In their spare time, they were urged to make tools such as bamboo baskets for removing stones and mud. In their letter to Mao Tse-tung from the workers on the Chengtu-Chungking Line, they boasted that they had made and invented several hundred kinds of tools during the period of its construction.[6]

C. Methods Used to Increase the Productivity of Labor

499 466 The Communists used all sorts of emotional appeals to increase productivity. After some activists among the workers had vowed not to go back home until they saw the train running between Chengtu and Chungking, 90 per cent of the builders gave up their New Year's vacation during the first year, and many young workers postponed their wedding dates. Early in 1951, the Communists organized the Three-Systematization and Five-Comparison campaigns among the working teams.[7] Within a period of four months (January to May), in consequence of these

6. New China Daily, Jan. 18, 1952, p. 4.

7. The Three-Systematization Campaign included systematization of thought, of organization, and of rules. The Five-Comparison Campaign included comparison of work, of efficiency, of progress, of safety, and of economy. For details about these movements, see New China Daily, Dec. 8, 1951, p. 2.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF16 SW China AF16

499 campaigns, 130,000 "model workers" were
466 elected and labor productivity increased. Taking the standard accomplishment for one work-day as 100 per cent, an average worker at first could fulfill only 25 per cent, but by the end of 1951, this had increased to 150 per cent.[8]

After the Communists entered Korea in November 1950, the Resist-America Aid-Korea Movement was instituted in the labor camps along the Chengtu-Chungking Line. The Communists aroused "hate-America" feelings among the workers and kept on telling the workers that the speeding of the construction of the Chengtu-Chungking Line was one way to defeat "American imperialism." The railway workers worked longer hours after being exposed to this propaganda. By the end of 1951, nearly 70 per cent of the entire undertaking had been completed.[9]

In addition to patriotic appeals, the Communists mobilized the workers to organize a Red Flag Campaign. To win the red flag, some members of one labor team worked steadily and slept only 30 hours in a period of 18 days[10] in order to fulfill the assigned task within the time required. One report from a Formosan

8. Wang Chih-fen, op. cit., p. 24.
9. New China Daily, Dec. 8, 1951, p. 2.
10. Ibid., June 22, 26, 1952.

499 source stated that the mortality rate among the 466 workers was as high as 10 per cent at the beginning of construction[11] in 1950, although the Communist press insisted that the workers seemed to think that the harshness of their life was nothing in comparison with what they had achieved. The Communists made the workers believe that they had built a road leading to paradise.[12]

D. Other Railway Construction in Southwest China

499 Since the sites of these railways are the same as the sites of the forced-labor camps, it would be helpful to list those lines under construction or in contemplation in Southwest China.[13]

1. Pao-chi--Chengtu Line connects Pao-chi in Shensi Province and Chengtu in Szechwan Province. The southern section was begun after the completion of the Chengtu-Chungking Line in 1952. As of May 1955 the track-laying

11. Kung-fei K'ung-chih-hsia Ti Szechwan [Szechwan Under the Communist Control], Taipei, Sixth Section, Central Committee, the Nationalist Party, Jan. 24, 1955, p. 24.

12. New China Daily, Jan. 18, 1952, p. 4.

13. Southwest China Behind the Iron Curtain, pp. 25-26.

499 work had already passed the Wei River. Originally it was scheduled to be finished in 1957, but the Communists have now scheduled its completion for 1956.

2. The Chengtu-Kunming Line runs from Chengtu in Szechwan Province to Kunming in Yunnan Province. Work on the line was begun in 1954 and scheduled for completion within the period of the first Five-Year Plan, which ends in 1957.

3. The Lung-ch'ang --Kweiyang Line is still being planned.

4. The Szechwan-Sikang Line will run from Chengtu to Ya-an in former Sikang Province. It is in the planning stage.

5. The Hunan-Kweichow Line will run from Chu-chou in Hunan Province to Kweiyang in Kweichow Province. It is under contemplation.

6. The Yunnan-Burma Line will run from Kunming in Yunnan to Nanta in Burma. It is under contemplation.

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III. MASS LABOR IN HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION (SIKANG-TIBET HIGHWAY)

The Government Administration Council

499 issued one directive concerning the conscription
464 of peasants to build and repair the highways in 1951,[14] which authorized all levels of local governments (administrative district, hsien, chu, and hsiang) to recruit and organize civilian labor for highway construction. It is stipulated in the directive that one recruit is limited to 10 standard work-days each year. One standard work-day is the average amount of work accomplished per day per person in that locality. The recruits receive no daily allowance for their food and are required to bring their own tools. In Southwest China, during five years of Communist control, about 5,000 kilometers (about 3,105 miles) of highways had been constructed with recruited laborers.[15] The most important one -- the Sikang-Tibet Highway -- was completed by the end of 1954.

A. Difficulties of the Job

491 The Sikang-Tibet Highway, 2,240 kilometers (about 1,400 miles) long, today links Lhasa with the rest of China. It is the first highway built in China at such a high altitude and in the face of so many difficulties. It climbs the

14. Compendium of Laws and Regulations Concerning Financial and Economic Policies of the Central Government, Peking, March 1952, Vol. III, pp. 713-15.

15. People's Daily, Jan. 13, 1955.

491 snow-clad mountains that tower 16,000 feet above sea level, with bridges across the tremendous ravines where mountain torrents plunge through twisting gorges. The area along the route is rocky, precipitous, and subject to earthquakes, landslides, avalanches, and shifting sands.

499 Although the Communists had no topographical
464 maps of this region, no geological, seismological, or weather records, and no engineers with experience in highway construction over such a terrain as the Plateau of Tibet, they mobilized a tremendous amount of manpower.

B. Labor Force and Working Conditions of the Laborers

By the end of 1951, the local governments of K'ang-ting, Ya-an, Ch'ang-tu and T'ien-chüan had recruited about 8,000 civilian laborers. They began to work with the man-power of the People's Liberation Army. In that winter they worked on the terrain 16,000 feet above sea level under severe weather, 25 degrees below zero (C). By March 1952, out of the original 8,000 builders, 3,500 had died as the result of hardships and the climate.[16] At the same time, a fresh

16. Cheng Chu-yüan, op. cit., p. 98.

499 supply of 50,000 recruits continued to pour
464 into the construction sites, including thousands of Tibetans who worked from the western end of the line.

499 The builders were equipped with rock drills and power-driven saws which they moved in first to get rid of the most stubborn obstacles. It seems that on the Sikang-Tibet Highway road-building machinery was used more than on other highway construction. In one report the Communists said that snowplows and bull-dozers cleared millions of cubic feet of snow and earth, replacing hand labor even on mountain tops and in deep forests.[17]

The Sikang-Tibet Highway has been the most-talked-about highway construction in Mainland China. Almost all the newspapers in different parts of China sent the reporters to the construction sites. This resulted in thousands of detailed press reports which disclosed the "heroic and tragic life of the masses who toiled on the roof of the world."[18]

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17. China Reconstructs, Peking, May 1955, pp. 2-5.

18. People's Daily, June 9, 1954, and Dec. 17, 1954; Ta-kung Pao [Ta-kung Daily], Aug. 7, and Sept. 26, 1954.

499 Workers and soldiers scaled vertical rock-walls, fought their way across rapids, and crept inch by inch across glaciers, disregarding wind, rain, and snow. Where the laborers worked in Ch'iao-erh-shan Mountain, the altitude was 17,000 feet above sea level, there was snow all year round, and the earth was frozen to a depth of over three feet. The workers built their tents on this hard-frozen floor and made their beds of dry leaves and tree branches. Sometimes they were buried by snow, their tents swept away by avalanches; in one place an avalanche fell every afternoon for five months. One section of the road cut across an immense tract of virgin forest which was cleared by manual labor, although each tree required several days' work by a team of three or four men.

The bridging of the Nu River was said to be the most "heroic" act accomplished by the builders. Both banks rose in sheer precipices about 3,00 feet high, and the current ran 20 feet per second. The point they had chosen for bridging had never been crossed. A group working on the Nu River bridge was completely cut off from its supply line, and the laborers were forced to live on rice gruel for two months before they were rescued.

499 The Communists gave better treatment to
466 the workers on the Sikang-Tibet Highway than to

499 workers elsewhere, for they did not use such
466 methods as "emulation drives" and "model workers' elections" to speed up work as they did on other projects. On the contrary, the authorities on the Sikang-Tibet Highway prohibited overtime work. The fact that the labor supply was not so abundant in this region and that they could not afford to transport workers from other parts of the country made them more lenient to the laborers on this project.

The Sikang-Tibet highway was opened to traffic by the end of 1954. To travel from Peking to Lhasa once took several months; today the trip can be made in fifteen days.

IV. REFORM-THROUGH-LABOR IN SOUTHWEST CHINA

697 A Communist report admitted that, in the Southwest Region, of the prisoners convicted through suppression of counterrevolutionaries, through land-reform laws, and Three-Anti and Five-Anti campaigns, 65 per cent had been organized by the end of 1951 into Reform-through-labor corps. They were employed in such heavy work as road-building, house construction, coal mining, collective farming, brick- and tile-manufacturing, and in handicraft industries such as weaving and shoe-making.[19] The size

19. New China Daily, Nov. 8, 1951, p. 2.

7: Hu K-5 (1934-) 1946 AF16 Southwest China AF16

499 The need for railroads in the Basin is most urgent and the clamor for railroad construction is loud. Already there are four projected railroads, namely, the Chengtu-Chungking, the Tzeliuching-Luhsien, the Chengtu-Paochi, and the Chengtu-Kuming lines (Fig. 7).[a] The Chengtu-Chungking projected line is already under construction. This line, after its completion, will link the rich agricultural Chengtu Plain and the growing industrial Chungking area. Furthermore, the completion of the Tzeliuching-Luhsien line will bring forth a more efficient operation of the vital brine-salt industry of the Basin.

509 d) The major air-routes.--If highway development in Szechuan Basin is still in its childhood, airway development is in its infancy. It was not until 1932, only about ten short years ago, at the initiation of the Shanghai-Chengtu air-line, that the Basin first experienced commercial air service. Since then, commercial flying in the Basin has been growing steadily. The original Shanghai-Chengtu Line has suspended operation since 1938 on account of the war.

There are now five principal air lines in the Basin, namely, the Chungking-Hongkong (now extended only to Kunming after the Japanese occupation of Hongkong in December, 1941), Chengtu-Sian, Chengtu-Kunming, Chungking-Chengtu, and Chungking-Loshan lines. Among them, the Chungking-Hongkong (now to Kunming) and Chengtu-Sian lines are the most important.[1]

All the above air-lines are engaged principally in passenger and mail service. Freight capacity is still very limited. In so far as use for cargo transportation is concerned, the present air-line facilities are far from satisfactory. The airways of Szechuan are at best only a symbol of modernization, but the growth has been phenomenal and the future outlook is promising. The cultural and educational value of the air traffic to the inhabitants of the Basin is certainly tremendous.

489 e) The relation of transportation to the agricultural land-use in the Basin.--Among all the regional problems of Szechuan 435 Basin, none is more important and more acute than that of transportation. The poor transportation has hampered in more than one way the efficiency of the Basin's agricultural and forestry land-use.

In the first place, the difficult and therefore costly transportation has prevented farmers in the Basin from earning as

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[1] Report of the Bureau of Reconstruction, Szechuan, op. cit., p. 52.

[a] [See end map 3 — Analyst]